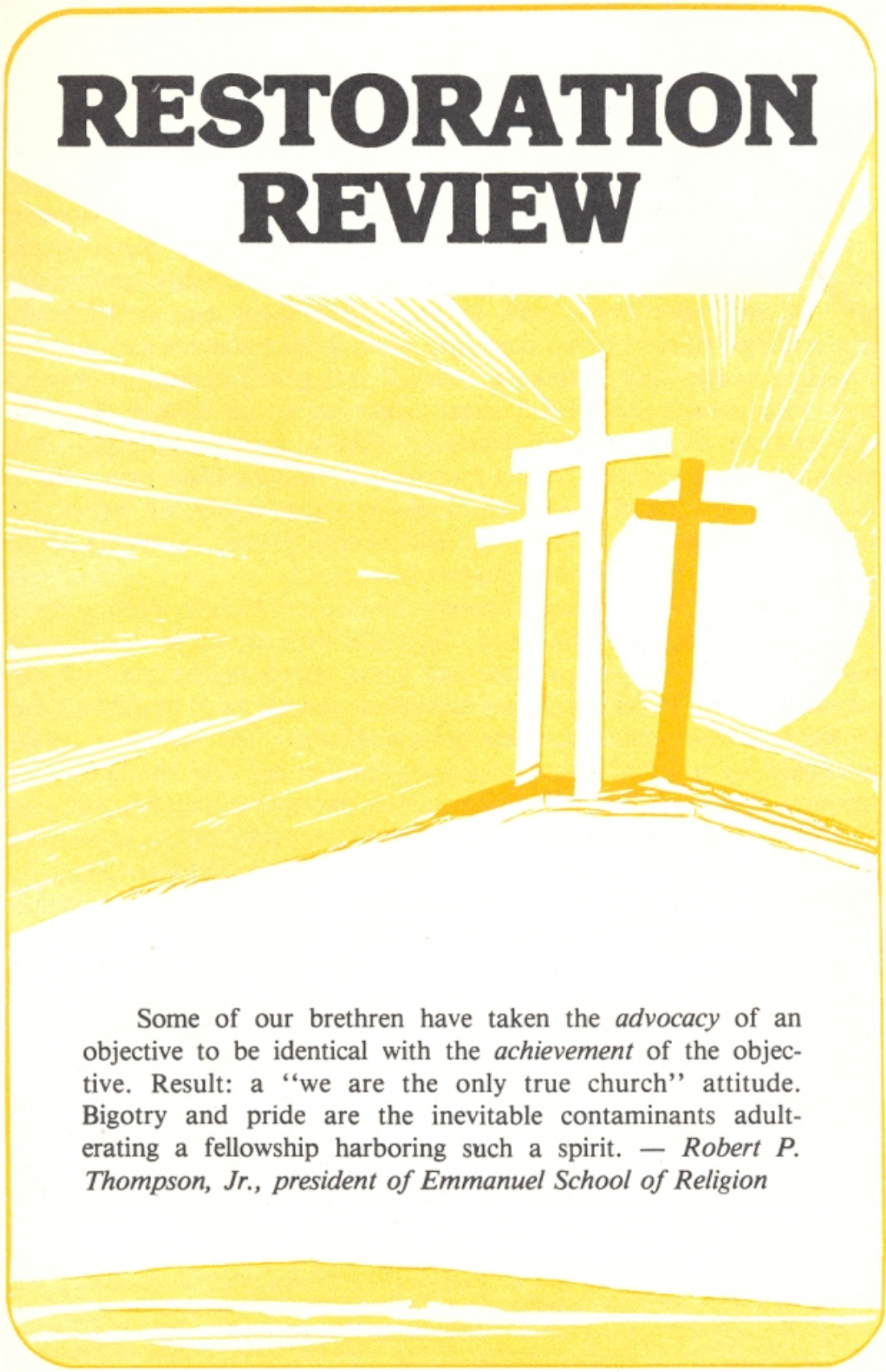
RESTORATION REVIEW



Some of our brethren have taken the *advocacy* of an objective to be identical with the *achievement* of the objective. Result: a "we are the only true church" attitude. Bigotry and pride are the inevitable contaminants adulterating a fellowship harboring such a spirit. — *Robert P. Thompson, Jr., president of Emmanuel School of Religion*

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Volume 23, No. 7 **Leroy Garrett, Editor** **September 1981**

Jesus Today. . .

THINGS THAT IMPRESSED JESUS

People can be measured in part by the things that impress them, whether it be medals, money, or merchandise. The poet that saw honesty as the noblest work of God was impressed by a virtue that many people treat indifferently. More people are impressed by love, humility, and gentleness than seek to cultivate such virtues. The evils of our society really concern some folk, but by no means all. Pornography doesn't seem to concern many people, and lawlessness, when it gets what one wants, seems to be all right. Ouida and I often listen to our record of William Barclay's comments on the beatitudes where he tells a story of Lincoln that profoundly impressed him. Young Lincoln was watching black men sold on the auction block, and he was heard to say, "God being my helper, I'll smash that system to hell," or some such words. It says something about Barclay that that episode would impress him.

I recall while visiting with Robert Meyers in Wichita when he was minister to the Riverside Church of Christ that he went out in the morning and gathered the beer cans that had been tossed in the yard of the parsonage the night before. "They think that shocks me," he said to me, with some amusement. I've often thought of that. The church is hardly understood by a world that thinks it is shocked by beer drinking. Any discerning man like Robert Meyers is well enough acquainted with our troubled world to know what is really evil. If the world sees us as shocked by empty beer cans but not by racial injustice, we have missed it.

I've been thinking about people and things that impress me. It changes with the years. A Ph.D. degree once impressed me, but not anymore. People with big vocabularies once impressed me, but they now bore me, especially when they make it so evident. I am still delighted when folk can have luxurious homes, especially when it is the fruit of their industry and frugality, but I am still not particularly impressed. And the Dallas Cowboys do not impress me at all and never have, even if Tom Landry does! Ouida impresses me with her "gentle and quiet spirit" and for always being the same. In 37 years of marriage she has never raised her voice or shown an ugly spirit, not even for a moment. And that also impresses the Lord, for an apostle says that such a spirit is "very precious" to God.

So there are two people that impress me, Tom Landry and Ouida Garrett, but not exactly for the same reason! If a man would run his business or a parent his family or an elder his church or a king his country the way Tom Landry runs a football team, the kingdom of God would be closer than it now is. The virtue of no nonsense. I see some of

this in President Reagan. If terrorism becomes a problem in this country, Landry should be put in charge of handling it, he and his neighbor Ross Perot. When the hostage crisis in Iran was at its peak, some bumper stickers around Dallas read, *Send Ross!*

This is a virtue we need to value more in the church. We put up with a lot of nonsense. To put it another way, *discipline* impresses me, a disciplined mind, a disciplined body, a disciplined spirit. I'm also impressed by transparency and vulnerability. I deplore phoniness and I see those who "play it safe" as less than courageous. I admire the person that is willing to lay it on the line, even if it tousles his hair and bloodies his nose. Those who wait for the smoke of battle to clear before they speak or act will never change anything, except perhaps their bank deposits.

I've taken this subject of impressions into the life of our Lord, asking: *What impressed Jesus, the evil as well as the good?* Sometimes he seemed surprised or amazed, which points up his humanity, such as the people's response when he returned to his home congregation: "He was greatly surprised, because the people did not have faith" (Mk. 6:6 TEV), or as the KJV puts it, "he marveled because of their unbelief." Disbelief *is* staggeringly impressive. In the light of all that God has done, how can anyone not be a Christian? The synagogue at Nazareth had nurtured the Christ in its very bosom, and yet it rejected him!

Sometimes Jesus was impressed by a person's faith, as if it were more than he expected, as with the Roman officer in Matt. 8. When Jesus offered to go to his home and minister to his servant, the officer said: "Oh, no, sir. I do not deserve to have you come into my house. Just give the order, and my servant will get well." This surprised Jesus, and he said to his followers: "I have never found anyone in Israel with faith like this." It was probably the quality of the man's faith that impressed Jesus more than the fact that he was not a Jew. There *should* have been that kind of faith in Israel, Jesus was saying, and it was hardly to be expected from a Roman army officer. He was a man who knew what authority was, and he *really* believed that Jesus had the last word when it came to authority, for "Just say the word" and it will be done was the depth of his faith.

Jesus was now and again impressed when someone sensed his power and sought through faith to appropriate it, such as the woman with a hemorrhage in Mark 5. "If I just touch his clothes, I will get well," she said to herself, with implicit faith. Mark tells us that her bleeding stopped the moment she touched Jesus' cloak, and that Jesus knew that power had gone out from him. Like a mother's fathomless love, Jesus had no less power once the woman tapped his wellspring of strength. Jesus realized that his power was being appropriated, that someone had plugged in. Jesus was impressed and it is an impressive story in that it reveals the nature of true faith. The woman was certain that she only needed

to plug in and that by a mere touch. She realized she needed to do something to show her faith, to appropriate what was available to her. Her only question was of her own strength, as to whether she could negotiate the crowd around Jesus and *reach* him. Him she never doubted; his power she never questioned. *If I can but touch . . .*

Does such faith elude us in our pragmatic world of self-reliance? Do we reach *inward* to ourselves, as if dependent only upon our own strength, which is the creed of humanism, or do we reach *outward* to Jesus, who has resources of power greater than we can imagine? Man is slow to learn that even when he is good enough it is not enough. Jesus stopped where he was when the woman made her gesture. He always had time. He was impressed. He reassured her amidst her tears and fears. Can we not believe that he will be equally impressed when we believe like she believed, a simple, childlike, trusting faith?

Jesus was impressed when people learned the lesson of love, as with the teacher of the Law in Mk. 12. As Jesus spelled out the two greatest commandments, the teacher immediately caught the essence of all law, not just the Law: *the point of all response* is *to love God with all one's personality.* He saw that if this is not what sacrifices are about, then they are pointless. "It is more important to obey these two commandments," he said, referring to man's duty to love God and his fellows, "Than to offer on the altar animals and other sacrifices to God." Jesus saw that he got the point and he was impressed.

You are not far from the kingdom of God, he said to him, which is about as revealing of the nature of the kingdom as anything Jesus ever said, for it is tantamount to saying that love is what the kingdom of God is all about. Jesus came to a people who had lots of religion but who missed the point of it. Here was a man, a teacher of the law, that got the point. Love is what it is all about, even when one offers a sacrifice at the temple. Jesus was impressed with the teacher's wisdom, for it was the wisdom of Scripture, which is much better than silver and gold, as Pro. 16: 16 puts it. Religion is love, love for God and love for man.

Don't you believe he is equally impressed when we learn that lesson, *really* learn it? I can hope that as Jesus reads *Restoration Review,* he can say, "Leroy, you are beginning to get the point of what it is all about. *You are not far. . .* " Never mind about being on top of it with my hands in full control. Never mind about the crowd, if *he* says, *You are not far,* that will be my glory! --- *the Editor*

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ARE WE UNDENOMINATIONAL?

The question as to whether the Church of Christ is a denomination along with all others is answered by a rather creditable source, Reuel Lemmons, editor of the *Firm Foundation* in Austin, Texas. The editor's answer is, however, more indirect than direct. He puts it this way: *the undenominational church has no name (Firm Foundation*, Vol. 98, July 21, 1981, p. 2).

Now that my wise fellow editor has supplied the major premise, I have a syllogism in mind.

The undenominational church is not named.

The Church of Christ is named.

Therefore, *The Church of Christ* is *not the undenominational church.*

It is not necessary to have had a course in logic to see the soundness of the argument. Those who have studied logic will remember that such a syllogism must obey six rules. This one obeys all six rules. The premises must also be true. The Texas editor has given us the major premise, and he has both dictionaries and common sense on his side. One must concede the premise to be true. *By definition* a denomination is something named, whether a ten dollar bill or a church. The church of the New Testament had no name, so it was undenominational. Editor Lemmons is as right as rain.

The minor premise must also be granted as true. The Church of Christ *does* have a name, which is Church of Christ. Thousands of churches paint it, write it, letter it, emboss it, engrave it, translate it in umpteen different ways around the world. It is not simply *a* name but *the* name.

The stubborn thing about a syllogism is that if the premises are true and if it obeys the rules of logic, the conclusion has to follow. There are no *ifs*, *ands* or *buts* about it, the conclusion must follow when the premises are true and valid. *If* you concede that the undenominational church has no name, and *if* you agree that the Church of Christ has a name, then you *must* accept the conclusion that the Church of Christ is not the undenominational church.

Well, at last this question can be put to rest once for all, and I thank Reuel Lemmons for helping us with the answer. *The Church of Christ* is *a denomination*, which is the obverse or equivalent to *The Church of Christ* is *not the undenominational church.*

I take it, then, that we will hear no more about the Church of Christ not being a denomination, while all other churches are. A little self-examination is good for us, isn't it? And logic is like taking a bath, as one logic text puts it. It is high time that we wash

ourselves of the silliest thing that we've ever tried to palm off on the world around us. We might even change our prayer from, "We thank thee that we are not a denomination like these others," to "God, be merciful to us sinners."

This is not all that big a deal to me, for I don't think it is all that bad to be a denomination. I am not convinced that denominational status can be avoided *in time,* unless a people opts to be a sect.

That is where I disagree with brother Lemmons' editorial, using sect and denomination as if they were the same. They are not. A denomination, as he says, is something named, and in the case of a church, it is a group that sees itself as part of the church at large, but not the whole. But a sect considers itself and acts as if it and it only is the church.

We can be (and of course *are)* a denomination, *if not a sect,* but we can be a denomination in protest, until the Spirit of God makes us all one --- and then there'll be no need for distinctive names, for we will all simply be the household of God on earth. - *the Editor*

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A FOOTNOTE ON THE ORGAN

That title strikes me as odd, and I am not sure why I chose it. Perhaps because I think enough has been said on the subject and that we need to say nothing more, except an occasional footnote. Maybe I am influenced by Alfred North Whitehead's comment about what 'philosophers have done with philosophy since Plato. "We have only added footnotes to Plato," he said, which is compliment enough for the old Greek sage. Anyway, this is a footnote, whatever a footnote is.

I am impressed by a report from Palma Bennett of the Bay Area Christian Church in Houston, a new church, to the effect that they have quite a number from the Church of Christ and not so many Independents. This confirms what I find in Christian Churches over the country: nearly always a few that have come from non-instrument churches. It works the other way of course, for Christian Church folk often join our congregations. We have several in our Denton church. This is obviously the way it should be, with believers of the Restoration heritage moving about freely, with no lines drawn.

This raises the question of *What difference does the organ make?* It must make little or no difference to those who can move from a non-instrument church to one where there is an organ. It would only be an educated guess as to how many Church of Christ folk could adjust themselves to that kind of change, provided they were pleased with the church on all other counts. Some years ago arch-conservative Guy N. Woods, now an editor of the

Gospel Advocate, estimated that a large percentage of our folk have no real objection to instrumental music. Perhaps he based this upon some survey. He was lamenting over the signs of digression among us and this was one.

My own guess would be that at least two-thirds of those in Churches of Christ could without great difficulty adjust themselves to membership in a Christian Church, provided the church was attractive to them otherwise, such as having strong Biblical preaching and an effective Sunday School. No more than one-third of our people would let instrumental music stand in their way. That's my estimate, based on a lot of personal contact. While I do not recall exactly, brother Wood's figures were something like that. They were high enough to be lamentable!

I am neither rejoicing or lamenting, for I could not care less about the organ. In terms of fellowship and inter-church relations it is to me a non-issue. And I am persuaded that the majority of Church of Christ people feel as I do about it. But I am pleased that our people in Christian Churches and Churches of Christ can move freely and lovingly from one church to another. It is a fact that generally speaking the only difference between the two churches is instrumental music.

These facts should cause our ardent anti-instrumentalists, who will not fellowship the Christian Church folk because of this matter, to do some hard thinking. If the instrument is so obviously a sin --- like drunkenness or lying --- why would so many among Churches of Christ view it so indifferently, especially after being taught against it all their lives? It is clear that a lot of our folk simply aren't buying the old line. Do the ardent anti's *really* believe this is a sign of apostasy on the part of our people, or is there something wrong with the argument that instrumental music is necessarily sinful?

I will include a prophecy in this footnote - "Prophecy About Instrumental Music" might have been a better title! While the Churches of Christ will always be acappella (for the foreseeable future), they will gradually move to a semi-instrumental practice. The instrument will be used more and more in "non-worship" settings - weddings, special programs, even in Sunday School. Once we have it in Sunday School, we will have gone full circle, for that's where we were when we first objected to it. When Church of Christ historians tell of how J. W. McGarvey kept the organ out of the old Broadway church in Lexington for a generation and finally left when it was brought in, they neglect to point out that McGarvey always approved of the instrument for Sunday School. So McGarvey's old Broadway "non-instrument" church was actually semi-instrumental, for they had two pianos going in Sunday School.

That is going to be bad news at places like Freed-Hardeman College where McGarvey is a hero. I hope I don't cause the old boy to be withdrawn from posthumously.

That is my prophecy. We will eventually be semi-instrumentalists, with our kids getting married in our chapels *with an organ* and our youngsters using the piano in Sunday School.

In fact we are already "semi's" (it might eventually become a label!) in our Denton congregation. At Christmas we were entertained by the little kids in a beautiful singing bee, with the piano (which is used by our day school, *not* in our "worship"). They could not have done the program without instrumentation. A funny thing, no one said the first word about the use of the piano. No one apparently gave it a thought.

There are two reasons why the instrument will never be used in congregational worship, perhaps three, and the scripturalness of it is not one of them. First, the instrument is not needed in the kind of singing we do, acappella singing being completely acceptable in and out of the church; second, a church can be as modern and fashionable as any other church without an instrument, as our people have proved; third, a century of tradition will keep us acappella unless there is a compelling reason to change, and there are no compelling reasons on the horizon, except those referred to, which will make us *semi-instrumentalists.*

Some of you younger ones can check this out in another quarter century or so, and if Churches of Christ do not have marriage chapels with organs in them, then you'll know that I was a better editor than a prophet! --- *the Editor.*

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Highlights in Restoration History . . .

STONE'S FOUR KINDS OF UNITY

Barton W. Stone is one of the most admired of our pioneers, not only for his quiet and irenic spirit, but also for his passion for Christian unity. "Let Christian unity be our polar star" was his theme, a motto that has burned in the hearts of our people all these years and one with great depth of meaning. It recognizes that only a united church can win a lost world, and so since our mission is to redeem the world, our guiding star must be a united church.

His genial personality was especially evident in his relation to Alexander Campbell, who was some 15 years his junior. Stone saw that the young reformer had gifts of leadership greater than his own, and so he graciously wrote: "I am constrained, and willingly constrained to acknowledge him the greatest promoter of this reformation of any living man. The Lord reward him!" The reader should note that Stone called their work

"this reformation," which is . the way they viewed their efforts, more than *restoration.* Stone went so far as to write: "I will not say, there are no faults in brother Campbell; but that there are fewer, perhaps, in him, than any man I know on earth."

But unity was his consuming theme, even more so than with Campbell, and his involvement in the union between the Christians and Disciples in Lexington in 1832 (Campbell was absent) led him to say: "This union, irrespective of reproach, I view as the noblest act of my life." He was persuaded that if the principles were followed that were set forth by Campbell that the movement they had begun would never divide. Since we his heirs have been so divisive it is well for us to examine those principles to see where we have failed. Stone's recognition of four kinds of unity, three of them false and one true, captures at least one of those principles.

Book union. Stone saw that there is no way to unite upon a book as such, not even the Book of all books. When Jesus left this earth, he did not leave a book behind - nor a philosophy or a system of doctrine. He left a united community behind, one filled with the Spirit, who was its helper and comforter. Their unity was a gift of the Spirit within them. They were not united upon a book but a person. Those who are united upon a book, whether it be the Bhagavadgita of Hindus or the Bible of the Jews and Christians, may achieve some sort of conformity of doctrine but it will not be the unity for which Jesus prayed and which is the Spirit's gift to the church. Two people may see eye to eye on everything in the Bible and still not be joined in heart and mind by the spirit of Christ.

Book unity is creedal, as Stone saw it, providing for an authoritative base in religion, but one that might well starve the heart. While the Scriptures are, of course, vital to the edification of the saints and for the strengthening of the tie that binds, the *tie* itself must be a Person.

Head union. Mankind has sought in vain for peace in some human philosophy or intellectual system. Wisdom may enlighten but it does not necessarily reconcile. We can get our "heads together" and work out disagreements, perhaps, but unity is not a matter of resolved propositions. Head union may produce peaceful coexistence, as in a marriage, but not the fellowship of the Spirit.

Water union. It is interesting that Stone would list union in baptism as one of the false unities. This may be because of the controversy on that subject during the time of the union between the Stone and Campbell movements, which was effected in spite of their disagreement. Even when they agreed on immersion, this was not real unity, Stone insisted. Seeing certain truths alike is not unity, for unity, being a gift of the Spirit, is a relationship. A mutual acceptance of facts may produce agreement, but only a Person can create relationship.

We may “convert someone on baptism,” but this may be something different from coming to know Jesus as Lord and Savior. While baptism is certainly an “answer” of the conscience set upon pleasing God (1 Pet. 3:21), it is not in itself uniting. Only Jesus makes us one. The indwelling Spirit is one of the promises that attends baptism - “Repent and be baptized for the remission of sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit” (Acts 2:38) - but it is the Spirit that creates the oneness, not the act of being baptized.

In being baptized for the remission of sins one can know that he is a Christian, for he has obeyed the ordinance of God that *formally* demonstrates what God has done inside the person. But it is what God does through the Spirit that makes us one, not what we do.

Fire union. This is the only union that is real unity, Stone believed, for it refers both to man’s spirit and the Holy Spirit. Unity has to do with heart more than mind - the human heart touched by the heart of Christ. Fire union is a matter of feeling, not merely intellectual assent to propositions. The unitist is a person in love, one in a caring relationship with his sisters and brothers and with Jesus.

Back in the 1940’s the national convention of the Disciples of Christ commissioned some of their scholars to make a restudy of their heritage. The statement they eventually made to the convention included a word about the nature of fellowship: “Fellowship among Christians is based on the relation they sustain to Christ. It is, therefore, personal, not organizational; religious - personal commitment to Christ - not theological; moral, not legal. The sole element of constraint is the love of Christ.”

This beautiful statement reflects the best thinking of our heritage on one of the greatest of all subjects, the fellowship of the saints, and it is what Stone meant by fire union. It is a unity that reaches beyond creeds, theology, structures, and party preferences to a personal relation to Jesus Christ. It is fire union in that it reaches the deeper recesses of the human spirit and burns within the soul. --- *the Editor*

ON HANGING IN

Einstein could not speak until he was four years old, and did not read until he was seven.

Beethoven’s music teacher said that as a composer he was hopeless.

When Thomas Edison was a young boy, his teachers said he was so stupid he could never learn anything.

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Pilgrimage of Joy . . . No. 57

DIVERSE MINISTRIES

W. Carl Ketcherside

Before I get too far from it, I must tell you about the Thanksgiving Workshop of Evangelicals for Social Action, in which I was invited to participate as a delegate. It was held in the Downtown Y.M.C.A. in Chicago and lasted for three days. There were two men from the Independent Christian Churches and one other from the Churches of Christ, Vic Hunter, who had been editor of *Mission* but had just resigned. It was interesting to listen to those who had been invited to speak in behalf of various groups, blacks, Orientals, and Hispanic. Some of the most fervent oratory was poured forth in behalf of a majority group in our society - women!

Among those who impressed me most were Paul Rees, Tong Gaw, and Carl F. H. Henry. The latter delivered one of the finest speeches I had ever heard. Leaving all theory aside he went straight to the Bible, and made it come alive. He seemed to be a master of the art of exposition. He developed the parable of the injured man on the road to Jericho in a truly new and exciting way. I liked the calm fashion in which he reacted to the questions and feedback which grew out of his speech. He was firm without being stubborn, practical without being pushy.

In looking back now upon the year I am describing, I find another thing which brought great satisfaction to Nell and myself. I had made it a practice, when I sold enough books to pay for the printing, to start giving the remainder away to college students absolutely free. We even paid the cost of wrapping and postage. In seven years we gave away over 4200 volumes. The postage alone was a little more than fifteen hundred dollars.

No one who wrote was turned down provided he personally requested the book. We refused to send them to young people at the request of preachers or parents. We did not want those who received them to feel obligated to read them. We did not propose to thrust anything down unwilling gullets. The books went to every continent. We mailed them to Cambridge, Oxford, the University of Leeds, and various other schools in England. We sent them to universities in Lebanon, Egypt, Taiwan, Amsterdam, Germany and South Africa. It was a real joy to get letters with odd-looking stamps and quaint handwriting asking for one of the books. It helped to show the circulation range of our little paper.

We were not even launched into the New Year when I received word of the death of longtime friends. M. S. Whitehead, one of the original students at the old Alabama Christian College, when G. A. Dunn was president, and the college was located at Berry, many years ago. We had become real friends. Harry Robert Fox, Sr., the gentle missionary

who planted the cause so firmly in Japan, and who finally retired to Inglewood, California. He wrote me such encouraging and stimulating letters, never complaining about his own increasing age and infirmities. Elizabeth Vermillion, of Riverside, California. I used to stay at their house in Springfield, Missouri, when I was known as “the boy preacher.” I played with her sons until they had to summon me into the house to get ready for evening meetings. John Hasty, the dyed-in-the-wool Republican of Nixa, Missouri. He lived to the age of 94, always kind and considerate of others. These all died in the faith, having seen the promises and embraced them afar off.

I returned to Westchester, California, the second week of the New Year. The meeting was kind of outstanding. Each night a different group sang. One night the whole Pepperdine University Chorus was there. Another night, the black choir from Figueroa Boulevard Church of Christ was present. A children’s group from a day school was present one night, and still another group from Westchester. These all harmonized a half hour before the preaching began. Every night there were people present from 36 to 53 congregations. It was like old home week. Harold Thomas presided over the meetings. Those of you who have heard him know what an outstanding job he does. I spoke one day for the Southern California Christian ministers, and another for the faculty meeting at Pepperdine.

I went from there to Macomb, Illinois, to visit the campus work which was being carried on under the versatile and capable direction of John Derry at Western Illinois University. This was the thing I liked to do best. It was a real thrill to engage in a dialogue session with young people of college age. Their questions were not stereotyped. They were new, fresh and vibrant. And they demanded answers to the problems of life. A good many students seemed jaded, tired and fed up with the daily routine. I noticed that those who had come to know Jesus did not seem to fit into the groove chopped out for the “average student.” Generally, they were a cut above, having added a spiritual dimension to life. And John was doing a great job in helping them to take full advantage of their new perspective.

I found a relatively small non-instrumental congregation in Macomb. Several of the members were connected with the college in the role of instructors. I sought to get them to begin clearing the ground for accomplishing some things together with brethren in the Christian Church. Their common historical roots could nourish them both. One thing I recommended was that they take turns holding their midweek Bible studies together. To me, it seemed a shame to have a mere handful of people studying in each place when they could combine for one night a week with no compromise of convictions.

The first of February found me at the World Convention of Missions at Grand Junction, Colorado. It was sponsored by Intermountain Christian College. Both the college and the convention were the fruition of the dream of Erskine Scates, the president of the school. Always an ardent advocate of sharing the Good News with the poverty-stricken people of the universe, he arranged the annual convention to inform and alert the inhabitants of the fertile Colorado Valley of the needs of the regions beyond. He has now departed to be with Jesus but he has left his sons to put wings to his words and feet to his prayers.

I had been in correspondence with Al B. Nelson, a long-time instructor at Texas A & M University, at College Station, about coming to Bryan, Texas. We had agreed upon February 19-21 as the date. The little Christian Church there had been beset by difficulties of one kind and another, and it was a pleasure to go and proclaim the good news of peace. I was agreeably surprised to see a goodly number of brethren from the Churches of Christ present, and although they tended not to agree upon some of my answers to certain questions, that was to be expected. I tried never to trim my response to please the querist, but to answer in such a manner that I would be willing to give an account if it was the last thing I ever said. I was also perfectly content to do as Martin Luther said, “Give men time.” We did not arrive at our present state in one day, nor would we get out of our predicament by sunset.

I made my home with Brother and Sister Nelson, and it was a lovely and quiet place. As we breakfasted together I could look out on the rear courtyard where Sister Nelson kept the birds well supplied with an “avian smorgasbord.” Some of them were so tame and had been regular customers for so long they would hop up on the windowsill and watch us as we ate. Brother Nelson and I wasted no time. It was a literary blessing for me to be with one who knew Texas so well, and we talked about two realms - heaven and the Lone Star State without stopping.

I went next to Lake Wales, Florida, for the Lake Aurora Christian Assembly meeting. Brethren reported later that it was the largest in attendance of any Men’s Retreat they had ever held. I spoke three times and held open forums for questions twice. The questions were especially good. The men had gravitated to Florida from every part of the north. They brought with them the sectional bias of each area, and they wanted to know the truth about their views. I pointed out that every movement begun by men to unite the believers inevitably passes through the same sequence --- charity, innovation, debate, division, sectarianism, and charity again. This starts the whole process over. We are just now emerging from our period of hibernation in the deep freeze of sectarianism. It is difficult for us to be charitable. We are afraid of going too far, of denying what our parents fought to achieve. But our parents were not perfect and a lot of things which they willed us are

questionable. We need not fear being lost at sea as long as we cling to the Rock. Jesus Christ is Lord. If we steer by Him instead of by history we will be safe.

At Lexington, Ohio I was scheduled to speak on three themes which were particularly relevant to our times: Do Demons Inhabit the Bodies of Men Today?; Can the Planets Decide Our Fate?; and Resurrection and the Life Beyond. These were on everyone's mind because of "The Exorcist." The house was filled for every service and more than a hundred gathered for the question periods each day. It was a real blessing to be associated with such generous, warmhearted saints, and I thrilled to their companionship in the Lord Jesus.

I had been issued an invitation to speak at the International Convention of Christian Endeavor which was to be held at Portland. More than a thousand persons were in attendance. After I addressed the entire group they split into two equal sections and I met with about 500 of them to answer questions about the faith in Christ Jesus. There were a good many delegates from foreign countries. As a result of speaking for the gathering I have three times been invited to address the Easter Sunrise Service which they sponsor in one of the most beautiful parks in Saint Louis. It attracts some 2500 persons.

I went next to Bloomington, Minnesota where I spoke to the congregation of which Robert Cash is the able minister. Fortunately, it was far enough to the north that the party spirit did not prevail with the same bitterness and intensity in which it is found farther to the south. As a result we had in attendance a great number of Church of Christ brethren. This always makes the question forums of particular interest. Both sides tend to ask about things of which the others have not the faintest inkling of knowledge. Because of their long years of isolation and insulation, both have accepted their own distinctives.

April 23-25 found me at the Colony Heights congregation in Fort Wayne, Indiana, with George L. Shull. It had been a long time since I had been in Fort Wayne. I had made three trips there previously. I found a town which had known the impact of change. The men who had been laboring there when I had originally visited were all gone. But Jesus was there alive and well. It was interesting to see how He could adapt to various circumstances and conditions, and influence them.

Less than two weeks later I was in Lansing, Michigan, for the State Christian Convention. This made it possible for me to meet a great many good friends I had made through the years. Michigan was always very interesting to me. It was in Detroit that Brother Malcolmson, an elder who had come over from Scotland to become wealthy in the coal importing business, had staked Henry Ford to his first $50,000 when Ford was beginning to experiment with his motor vehicle. Ford used to attend services with him. Legend has it that he immersed Ford. They had no preacher for they were staunch

believers in mutual ministry. Malcolmson spoke on the theme once at the Abilene Christian College lectureship. It was a masterful address.

In 1856, Isaac Errett left Warren, Ohio, with a group interested in the lumber business. He had to travel by stage from Detroit far back into the timber country. The business failed and Errett started planting churches instead of cutting down trees. He brought about 1000 new members into the body before leaving for Cleveland to edit the *Christian Standard.* Before he left he was under fire for a sign on his door which read “Rev.” Isaac Errett. He was the first man in the Restoration Movement to adopt a title. I went to Michigan with a lot of history behind me. I tried to make a little while I was there.

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THE MISSING INGREDIENT

Edward Fudge

Something is sorely missing in the religious experience of millions of professing Christians today. Unbelievers sense it -- and scoff, or simply go their way. Believers sense it -- and languish in silence, or complain without avail. Whether they bemoan or bewail, many church-going elders, preachers and plain people in the pew, recognize in their own surroundings a particular New Testament picture they had as soon not see.

Often they find a sight like the Lord did in Sardis: “a name that you are alive, and you are dead” (Rev. 3:1-4). Too frequently Laodicea reappears. Churches claiming wealth and self-sufficiency are found under the divine gaze to be wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked (Rev. 3:17). Many are “holding to a form of godliness, although they have denied its power” (2 Tim. 3: 1 ,5). There is still a “false circumcision” (Phil. 3:2). Religious “Lambs” still rise from the earth - only to be betrayed by their dragon voice (Rev. 13:11, 13).

The answer is not found in mere moralism, nor will the problem disappear in a new flurry of activism. While the “Moral Majority” may be presently trendy, and even assuming it truly represents a majority, it is not nearly “Moral” enough to fit the need. What good will be done denouncing homosexuality - if we are quiet about adultery in general? Banning wholesale abortion is certainly commendable - but have we no concern about an arms race and a nuclear proliferation which threatens life at every age? Turning loafers off the welfare rolls might even have moral aspects -- but where are the voices crying out against corporate greed and demanding institutional justice throughout our land? Moralism suffers from the malady of any codified approach: no set of rules can go far enough, and no sinful person dares apply even the rules we have with an even and

objective hand. Death in the church will not be dispelled by more rules, or louder preaching, or scathing denunciations of character flaws ever more minor.

Help will not come either from more activities. We are practically worked to death already. God deliver us from still more committees, or organizations, or meetings! The missing ingredient is much simpler than that -- and it has always been within reach of any generation who would stoop low enough to find it. Solutions to our ills in Christendom must come from outside ourselves. That solution is easier stated than lived. It is nothing other than a Christ-centered, Spirit-powered, well-rounded walk with God, in living fellowship with a committed church. Any individual can have it, at least down to the third comma. Several individuals together can make a “committed church.”

May I suggest five goals of such a group - a group which will exhibit life and attract seekers after reality? I intentionally say “goals” instead of “marks,” because the latter word so often takes on tones of “look at us” or “proof that we have arrived,” and no one who thinks he/she has arrived actually has! The five goals are:

1. Anchored on Jesus Christ alone. Any church that does not rest all hope on Jesus alone, preach Him alone for salvation, seek to draw people to Him alone for security and blessing, has no right to say it is anchored on Jesus. It matters not what name is over their door, what credentials they claim for their ministers, or what ecclesiastical history and pedigree they might boast (Matt. 16:19; Phil. 3:3; 2 Cor. 4:5). The group that truly is anchored on Jesus will be easily recognized, for wherever it acts and whenever it speaks Jesus will be held up and magnified. Cheap motels and counterfeit churches try to make up with signs what they lack in substance. Authentic products need no props.

2. Alive in the Spirit of God. We don’t need the Spirit to come, John Stott reminds us, for He came on Pentecost and has never left! We may well need to open up to His infilling, to submit to His guidance, to walk according to His direction. A church without the Holy Spirit is a form without power, a corpse without life. It is too bad that the adjective “spiritual” has accumulated its overtones of withdrawal from life in many instances. It is sad that the adjective “charismatic” has so many implications that mar its possible beauty. God’s grace (charis) should bring joy (char-), and His gifts (charismata) will do just that, properly received and used. But what we need most is a walk -- not just a word. We need action, not merely adjectives. Feed on the Word! Pray! Ask God to fill and empower and use! Then praise and persevere -- trust and obey -- alive by the Spirit of God to a life of the Age to Come, a quality of life the world cannot know apart from Christ Jesus!

3. Aglow with praise. When the early disciples met, they had a reason for coming together. Their activities were intended to build up (edify), stir up (exhort), and bind up (console). They focused on the God who is there -- and visitors could tell He was also

here! One “mark” of the “true church” in Paul’s list of Philippians 3:3 is that it worships in the Spirit of God. Our assemblies today must also take on this character. I presently meet in a renovated barn with about 30 other saints, and we all have our frailties and sins. But when we come together in the name of Jesus and begin to lift up the Lord’s name in praise, anyone in the room knows that the primary Person present cannot be seen. We cannot conjure this effect by our own manipulation; we receive it as a blessing inherent in the promise of Christ that where two or three are gathered in His name, He will be in the midst. All we need to do, as one song puts it, is “forget about ourselves, and magnify the Lord, and worship Him!”

4. Alert in fellowship. Every disciple has his/her own range of interests in life. But we all overlap somewhere. Beginning with our common bond in Jesus, let us seek out the areas of overlapping, and cultivate the oneness we already possess. A concordance will provide much food for thought it we will simply look up every place New Testament writers use the expression “one another” or “each other.” God save us from a church-centeredness that robs us of the personal relationship with Christ! But God also save us from the “cowboy-mentality” of our individualistic Western culture which thinks we can walk with God down a road that no one is traveling but us! There is a false kind of “true church.” But there is a true church -- and God brings all His people together in it.

5. Ambitious in service. One of the tragedies of all time was when Israel, whom God had graciously saved from Egyptian bondage, then fell like flies across a great dessert. Let us beware today, lest having been delivered from the bondage of legalism, we perish in the desert of lethargy and indifference. We are not saved by our good works -- but we are certainly saved in order to do good works (Eph. 2:8-10; Titus 2-3). What a shame if those who claim to have learned the grace of God more fully, cast reflection on that grace by lives of selfishness, indolence and sheer unconcern. The fields are white unto harvest! There is a vineyard to be reaped! There is work to be done while it is today. Paul’s joy was that he labored more abundantly than his contemporaries, and that he did it all by the grace of God. Because some have misused and perverted its meaning, we still cannot afford to ignore James’ clear warning: “Faith without works is dead.”

Let us each pray, wherever we are, and whether we must say it alone or are privileged to say it with others:

“Father, I believe You;
Jesus, I receive You;
Holy Spirit, I now free You --
Create in me new life.”

A world is waiting and watching. -- 4 *Sandra Lane, Athens, Al* 35611

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BOOK NOTES

Dietrich Bonhoeffer was a theologian executed by the Nazis in 1945. His life, death, and thought has influenced recent theological thought, giving the church such terms as "cheap grace" and "religionless Christianity." There is now *A Bonhoeffer Legacy: Essays in Understanding,* edited by A. J. Klassen, which you will appreciate if you enjoy theology, at 18.95 postpaid.

Believers today are very interested in the meaning of the church, its mission, its relation to the kingdom. One of the most challenging books on this subject is *The Community of the King* by Howard A. Snyder. 4.80 postpaid. Another title that would make our list of "must" is John R. W. Stott's *Christ the Controversialist.* Some assure us, in appreciation for recommending it, that it is the most informative book they ever read. We will sell it as long as it is in print. 4.65 postpaid.

If you are interested in understanding non-Christian religions and their relation to the Christian faith we suggest *Dialogue: The Key to Understanding Other Religions,* by Donald K. Swearer. 4.95 postpaid.

The advantage of *A Short History of the Early Church* by Harry R. Boer is that in only 177 pages he takes you from the days of the Roman empire and Jewish and Greek backgrounds to the great councils and theological problems of the fourth century. You get an overview of the first four centuries of the church, *lean but meaty.* 4.65 pp.

In *Dayspring* Anne S. White has selected a Scripture and composed a short meditation for each day of the year. It takes the form of talking to His son or daughter who is reading, and it especially speaks to women. Ideal for a gift. 5.50 pp.

Both at home and abroad *Peake's Commentary on the Bible* has for generations been considered the best one-volume commentary on the Bible. It has recently been completely revised and reset. There are 175 pages of introductory articles and nearly 1,000 pages of comments on the Bible. But it is not a "conservative" work and you should not use it if you are not willing to be exposed to the latest in the critical study of the Bible. The regular price is 34.95, but we will sell them for a limited time at 29.50 postpaid.

The New Westminister Dictionary of the Bible, edited by H. S. Gehaman, at 16.95 post-paid is a super piece of work and a gold mine of information.

We will send you the *Memoirs of Alexander Campbell* by Robert Richardson, the most important work ever published on the Restoration Movement, for it is not only a treatise of Campbell but upon the reformation that he led. 19.95 postpaid.

We have bound volumes of this journal for the past four years only: *Principles of Unity and Fellowship* (1977) and *The Ancient Order* (1978) are 5.50 each; *Blessed Are the Peacemakers* and *With All the Mind* (double volume, 1979-80) is 8.50. If you pay in advance, we pay the postage.

Please remit with your order as we no longer have the time to keep books, except for our own bound volumes, which you can pay for upon receipt of invoice if you choose.

We remind you to reserve your copy of the editor's *The Stone-Campbell Movement: An Anecdotal History of Three Churches* at pre-publication price of 17.95. We are pleased to have received well over 100 orders from our first announcement.

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OUR CHANGING WORLD

Gary Cummings, formerly a Church of Christ minister and a pacifist, joined the Quakers sometime back and enrolled in their graduate school in Earlham, In. He now ministers to a Quaker church (the type that has a settled pastor) in West River, In., which is 155 years old, dating back to 1825. He sent us a brochure that pictures the elegant old meetinghouse and a description of their service: "Most of all we seek to worship our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. In the singing, the silence, and the spoken word we are confronted by Christ." The surprise in the brochure is that the church has a "cry room." We supposed that Quaker children did not cry, especially at church! We are wondering if Gary's case might be the first time ever that a Church of Christ minister, educated at Abilene, became a Quaker minister.

Kenneth Pries, First Christian Church, 725 Jay St., Colusa, Ca. 95932, announces a "Restoration Roots Rally" that includes Frank Pack of Pepperdine University, Robert Fife of Westwood Foundation, and Karl Irvin, Jr. Northern California Disciples regional minister. The dates are Oct. 29-Nov. 1, and you should write to Kenneth for further information or call him at 916-458-4270. You should attend this significant event if

possible, and we hope to carry a report of it.

During the summer *Time* ran an article on Karl Barth, drawn from the publication of his *Letters 1961-1968*, which you can order from us at 18.95. The article tells how Barth once wrote to a German prisoner contemplating suicide: "Regarding your prayers. How do you know they are in vain? God has his own time, and he may well know the right moment to lift the double shadow that now lies over your life."

Nelson Page, 12504 Lamp Post, Austin, Tx. 78758, is willing to share information with you about the Prison Fellowship program. They are conducting studies in the new Federal prison in nearby Bastrop, and they plan to bring in gospel music groups and conduct seminars.

ACU is conducting its 15th annual preachers' fellowship day on Sept. 17, during which the featured speakers will present their favorite sermons.

M. E. Gray, 30 years in the ministry, wrote a letter to the elders of the East Main Church of Christ in Tupelo, Ms. commending them for hiring a preacher who "teaches more Bible truth and more unpleasant historical truth about our mounting problems than we have cared to face up to." He goes on to say: "Our Church of Christ traditions have been a veil of vanity and ignorance over our eyes to hide many Bible truths from us. We need to decide whether we intend to be Christians only or continue to be Pharisees, legalists, Campbellites, or sectarians, as we have been, while saying that we were none of these."

Talmadge McNabb, amused by our article on the Church of Christ being for sale, sent us a newspaper clipping, the heading of which read HOLY SPIRIT WINS TROPHY. He thought maybe the churches had capitulated and had recognized the Spirit's mission in the life of the believer, bestowing a trophy, only to learn that it was a report on a sports event at the local Catholic high school. Talmadge knows, of course, that it is the Holy Spirit that *gives* the trophies!

Ouida and I have kept up through the years with a Church of Christ defector, Curtis Lydic, an old friend who has gone into metascience religion and now has his own university of metaphysics. We are impressed with the subject offerings, such as planetary healing and metasexuality, but the one that really tempts me is out-of-body travel! Another of our defectors, Warren Lewis, a Tubingen, Ph.D., went to the Moonies, to teach at their seminary at least, though he never really joined the sect. Anyway, the Rev. Moon has summarily fired him, but we do not yet have the details on why. But should he want to

"Come back home," to use Editor Lemmons' terminology, I should think he has taken the first big step. Fired by Moon! Only a lunatic would not be impressed by that.

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READERS' EXCHANGE

I have read Malcolm Muggeridge's *The End of Christendom* and find it most encouraging. This man is a real wonder! I plan to encourage all who get my new book *(Searching for Real Christianity)* to get his and read it first. You will notice that in my book I do not equate the churches of Christ with Christ's church universal. --- *Ted Cline, 3849 W. Encanto Blvd., Phoenix, Az. 85009.*

I was baptized in 1979 after being a Presbyterian. I am writing to ask you a very important question: Do you believe a sincerely penitent, non-baptized believer, like a Presbyterian, will be saved if he dies? --- *Arnaldo J. Hernandez, Rio Piedra, P.R.*

(One is not lost because he is unbaptized but because he is a sinner. It is when he turns from his sins, resolved to obey God in all things, that he is accepted, as Isa. 62:2 indicates: "I am pleased with those who are humble and repentant, who fear me and obey me." One can obey only what he understands, so God holds us responsible for disobedience, a rejection of what we know He wants us to do. Baptism is the act *that formally* marks our covenant relationship with Him, but not necessarily the time that he begins to be "pleased" with us, to quote the prophet. And I hardly conceive of one as lost with whom the Lord is pleased, and He is pleased so long as we obey what we know to obey. --- *Ed.)*

My family and 1 have recently left a congregation where we were members for years. A new Church of Christ has formed, and now we are trying to decide whether we should join them or go somewhere else. We were forced out of the congregation because we would not judge and condemn people for their opinions. There has been so much pain that we do not want you to use our names or identify us in any way. But if you could write something on churches binding their opinions on others to the point of causing them to leave I would appreciate it. --- *Name withheld*

(This is the heart of our heritage - *In opinions liberty* - but it is a heritage we have forsaken. The reason one wants to leave when opinions are made into law is the same reason one wants to get out of prison, *to be free.* The tragedy is not that many are leaving, for they are our freedom-riders, but that so many stay and yield to the system that enslaves

them. So with prisons, for some don't want out, actually fearing to be free. There are many others who have "left" even though they stay, people whose hearts and minds have long since renounced the system, even though for one reason or another they are still *bodily* present. These await the coming reformation --- *Ed.)*

We are pleased with the response to the first announcement of our history of the Stone-Campbell Movement. Ouida is now reading it for the first time (preparing the index) and she says she gets so engrossed in the story that she forgets her job. I wrote it for people like Ouida and *you*, not for scholars and historians, though some of these have read it and made helpful suggestions. It is not a "house" history that favors or defends any persuasions within the Movement. Moreover, we tell the bad along with the good, laying it all out, allowing you to decide for yourself, even with Alexander Campbell!
The pre-publication price is 17.95, which page for page is about the price of this journal, and that's inexpensive. Place your order now but send no money. We will bill you with the book. We will not make the publication date of Oct. 1, but it will not be much longer than that.

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